DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 273 369 PS 015 994

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TITLE The Psychology of Adolescents: Symposium IV A.
PUB DATE [84]
NOTE 21p.; In "Preparation for Adulthood. Third Asian Workshop on Child and Adolescent Development"; see PS 015 978.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Foreign Countries; *High School Students; *Individual Characteristics; *Mental Health; Personality Problems; *Rural Areas; Secondary Education; *Self Concept; *Social Development; Socioeconomic Status; Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS Korea; *Malaysia

ABSTRACT

These two symposium papers provide: (1) a profile of rural adolescents in Malaysia, by Chiam Heng Keng; and (2) report the findings of a study of the psychology and life of Korean children and adolescents, by Joon Hee Park. In the former report, 521 boys and 550 girls completed a checklist consisting of 195 problems and indicated problems which troubled them to some extent or troubled them greatly. Subjects ranged in age from 13 to 17 years, attended schools in three rural areas in Johor, and were predominantly from low income families. They were also enrolled in Form I through Form V of secondary school, and different in academic ability. Discussion focuses on physical and health conditions, personality, mental health, social relations, relations with the opposite sex, relations with parents, and problems related to school and studies. The study of Korean youth followed up a nationwide study suggesting that the psychology and life of Korean children and adolescents had been influenced by traditional Confucian philosophy. Findings indicated that Korean youth's psychology and life had changed between 1979 and 1984--in both desirable and undesirable directions. Discussion centers on elementary school students' life patterns and psychological experiences and on junior and senior high school students' views of the state, ethics, the home, and schooling. (RH)

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SYMPOSIUM IV A : The Psychology of Adolescents

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A Profile of Rural Adolescents in Malaysia

Chiam Heng Keng

The psychology of adolescents appears to fascinate many Malaysians. This is evident by the number of articles written on this subject in the newspapers and in home or woman magazines. The public interests in adolescents can be attributed to several factors which include the increase in drug addiction, the extent and intensity of disciplinary problems in schools and the large portion of the population having children within this age range.

On the academic front, many educators are becoming increasingly aware that educational psychology textbooks are basically describing the behaviour of people of developed countries and we are assuming that the psychology of human beings is similar. The danger of such an assumption is that we are using the norms of developed countries to interprete and evaluate the behaviours of Malaysian adolescents. Recognising the dangers of such a practice and the lack of local data, an attempt to learn about our adolescents was carried out in 1976. Since then, a series of research on adolescents has been carried out, either individually or in teams. The findings of some of these research have been reported (Chiam, 1978; Chiam and Ng, 1978; Chiam, 1979; Chiam, 1982; Chiam, 1983a; Chiam, 1983b; Chiam and Fatimah Haron, 1983; Lim and Menon, 1983; Nik Azis and Mutter,1983 and Chiam, 1984). All these papers with the exception of one (Chiam, 1984) are about urban adolescents.

This paper is based on the study carried out in 1983 in three rural areas in Johor. The areas included a government land scheme (Felda), a small-holder estate and a fishing village. In each of these areas, there is only one secondary school which provides education for both boys and girls from Form I to Form V. Generally, the schools have very few bright students

since academically-able students are transferred to residential schools in the urban areas. The school in the Felda scheme, in particular, is depleted of academically bright students.

Table 1
Distribution of the Sample According to Grade Level

Grade Level	%
Form I	15.9
Form II	20.6
Form III	21.2
Form IV	20.0
Form V	22.3

The sample consisted of 1,075 Form I to Form V students; 550 were girls, 521 were boys and 4 of the students did not specify their gender. For each grade level (Table 1), the above average, average and below average classes were chosen so that a range of ability was sampled. In reality, the difference in ability between the above average and average class was very small since the bright students were removed to residential schools after completing their primary school education. At Form I level, only the above average classes were chosen because our earlier studies revealed that many below average students in Form I could not comprehend the check-list of problem (Chiam, 1979). As a result, the percentage of above-average' ability students was higher and the percentage of below-average students was lower than what it should be (Table 2).

Table 2
Distribution of the Sample According to Academic Achievement

Problem	Boys N=521	Girls N=550	Total N=1075
Above average	44.5	49.8	47.3
Average	34.2	33.5	33.9
Below average	21.3	16.7	18.9

Most of the adolescents were from the lower income group as shown in Table 3. The majority of the parents had only primary school education and almost 25% of the mothers did not go to school (Table 4). The parents who had university or college education were the teachers of the schools or administrators in the areas. Those who completed Form V or Form VI were usually clerks, supervisors or nurses. A number of subjects did not indicate their parents' educational level. This was because the respondents

were instructed to check the 'do not know' column if they were unsure of the highest level of education completed by their parents.

Table 3
Distribution of the Sample According to Socioeconomic Status (SES)*

SES	%
High	0.6
Middle	3.0
Low	89.3
Retired or Unemployed	6.6
Dead	0.5

Note. *In the case of single parent family, the occupation of the mother was computed if she was working. If the father was unemployed but the mother was working, then the mother's occupation was computed.

Table 4
Highest Level of Education Completed by Parents of the Sample

Level of Education	Father	Mother
No schooling	7.7	24.5
Religious education	7.7	15.1
Primary	68.8	51.3
Form 3	4.1	1.7
Form 5	1.0	0.2
Form 6	0.2	0
College	0.6	0
University	0.1	0.1
No response	9.8	7.1

METHODOLOGY

A checklist consisting of 195 problems, based on the Mooney Problem Checklist format, was administered to each class by the researchers with the help of two assistants. The subjects were required to underline the problems which troubled them, afterwhich they had to circle those which troubled them greatly.

Physical and Health Conditions

Not many adolescents in rural areas appeared to have much of a problem with their height or weight. However, 24.3% of the boys complained of being too thin. As expected, more girls than boys felt they were too fat but only 13.8% checked this as their problem. More girls than boys felt they were too short. Though the difference is small, nonetheless, the finding is surprising as, traditionally, to be small and petite is being feminine. Have the girls' perception of beauty changed? Are they being influenced by Western standards? To what extent has this change in standards of beauty been changed? Further research is necessary to answer these questions.

Table 5
Problems Related to Physical and Health Conditions of the Adolescents

Problems	Boys %	Girls %	Total %
Too thin	24.3	14.2	19.1
Too fat	3.9	13.8	9.0
Too short	18.6	20.2	19.3
Too tall	3.7	3.6	3.6
Not attractive enough	14.5	17.0	15.9
Poor complexion	27.5	26.7	27.2
Wanting to improve my appearance	18.4	24.9	21.7
Easily tired	29.0	35.4	32.4
Not as healthy as I desired to be	14.4	16.7	15.6
Smoking	5.9	0.5	3.1
Getting sick too often	8.1	7.6	7.9
Not getting enough sleep	16.2	10.7	13.3

More than a quarter of the boys and girls in the sample were troubled by poor complexion. This finding is not unexpected as pimples and acnes are the bane of adolescents' lives. Though more than 27% of the adolescents checked 'poor complexion' as their problem, only 15.9% felt they were physically unattractive. However, more than 21% were dissatisfied with their appearance and wanted to improve upon it. As expected, more girls than boys checked physical unattractiveness as their problem and the desire to improve upon it.

Although few of them felt they were unhealthy or were not getting enough of sleep, yet many of them (32.4%), particularly the girls (35.4%), complained of getting tired easily. Visually, they appeared healthy. What is the explanation? Is their lack of physical fitness due to the lack of proper diet? Is this feeling of tiredness psychological? To answer these questions, further research is necessary.

Personality

The problem checked by the adolescents can reflect their personality and psychological make-up. The problems shown in Table 6 provide an insight into the feelings and personality of the adolescents in the sample.

Table 6
Problems Related to Personality of the Adolescents

Problems	Boys %	Girls %	Total %
Timid and shy	23.5	25.8	24.5
Sensitive	11.9	31.3	21.7
Easily hurt	18.7	34.6	26.4
Easily embarrassed	39.4	45.5	42.6
Argumentative	14.2	13.6	15.0
Often acting without thinking	20.9	18.9	20.0
Feeling moody	7.3	16.4	11.9
Day-dreaming	35.3	26.0	30.5
Feeling nervous	26.5	29.9	28.1
Afraid to make mistakes	36.1	36.9	36.6
Having trouble to make up my mind about smething	31.3	40.5	35.9
Failing in many things I have tried to do	20.5	20.9	20.8
Lacking self-confidence	38.1	43.1	40.8
Feeling inferior	25.8	31.5	28.6

The data shows that many of the adolescent boys and girls were timid and shy, nervous, feeling inferior, lacking in self-confidence and easily embarrassed. They had difficulties in making up their minds and were afraid to make mistakes. Among these problems, 'easily embarrassed', 'lacking in self-confidence', 'afraid to make mistakes' and 'difficulties in making up one's mind' were the most common. These were also the common problem of urban adolescents (Chiam and Nik Azis, 1983). Fear of making mistakes and difficulties in making up one's mind are probably related to a lack of self-confidence. Adolescents who lack self-confidence are likely to fear making mistakes and consequently, have difficulties in making decisions. These problems are intensified if the adolescent also possesses feelings of having failed in many of the things that they have tried to do. Our data show that 20.5% of the boys and 20.9% of the girls were troubled by this feeling of failure.

Girls, on the whole, tended to feel inferior and lacked self-confidence: 43.1% of the girls and 38.1% of the boys checked lack of self-confidence; 40.5% of the girls and 31.3% of the boys had difficulties in making up their minds; 45.5% of the girls and 39.4% of the boys were easily em-

barrassed; 31.5% of the girls and 25.8% of the boys felt inferior. The data suggest that more girls than boys had negative feelings towards themselves. Similar findings were obtained with the urban sample (Chiam and Nik Azis, 1983). Why should the girls feel inferior? The background data show that there are more girls in the above average class and less girls in the below average class (Table 2). There were no sex differences in the feelings that they had failed in many of the things that they had attempted to do. Could the inferiority complex of the girls be brought about by the lower status accorded to them? An earlier study found that the self-concept of adolescent girls was significantly lower than that of adolescent boys although there was no significant differences in their academic achievement and IQ (Chiam, 1976). This was attributed to the lower status accorded to girls.

Table 6 also shows that adolescent girls were more emotional than their male counterparts. Of the sample of girls, 31.3% checked being sensitive and 34.6% indicated being easily hurt while the percentage of boys who checked these two problems was only 11.9 and 18.7 respectively. Argumentativeness and moodiness were not common problems among the adolescents. However, a greater number of them admitted to being impulsive. More boys than girls tended to have this trait. 'Day dreaming' was also checked by more boys than girls: 35.3% of the boys and 26.0% of the girls had this problem.

MENTAL HEALTH

The mental health of an individual affects his effective functioning. Case-studies of students with disciplinary problems revealed that the majority of the girls felt unwanted and unloved by their parents (Chiam, 1983). Besides feelings of rejection, emotions such as worry, isolation, guilt and unhappiness can plague a person and prevent her from functioning properly. Table 7 shows some of the feelings which can affect the mental health of the adolescents.

An examination of Table 7 reveals that girls tended to have more emotional problems than their male counterparts. Among girls, 'worrying' topped the list with 41.9% and this was followed by 'feelings that nobody understands me' (37.3%), 'cannot forget the mistakes I have made' (36.2%), 'no one to whom I can talk to about my problems' (30.3%) and 'sometimes, feeling that it is better I have never been born' (25.8%). Although only 12.8% of the girls checked 'having feelings of extreme loneliness', this problem must not be pushed aside on the ground that it is not widespread because of its seriousness. An adolescent who has this problem probably feels that nobody understands her and that she has no one to whom she can talk to about her problems. The mental health of such an adolescent is highly questionable. Similarly, though problems such as 'having memories of unhappy childhood', 'being troubled by

nightmares', 'thoughts of committing suicide' or 'thoughts of insanity' are not widespread, they are serious problems. Therefore, adolescents with these feelings must be given due consideration especially if the youngsters had indicated that these problems troubled them greatly. Professional help may be necessary as these problems are often the manifestations of more deep-rooted emotional problems.

The boys appeared to have less emotional problems. Given preference for boys and the higher status accorded to them, they are often better loved and cared for, especially when they are young. The love and attention they get will probably make them feel more secure. They are also less likely to be subjected to ill-treatment or made to feel unwanted or superfluous even though there are other boys in the family when they were born.

Table 7
Problems Related to Mental Health of Adolescents

Problems	Boys %	Girls %	Total %
Worrying	31.9	41.9	36.8
Having feelings of extreme loneliness	9.0	12.8	10.9
Afraid to be left alone	12.6	21.6	17.6
Having guilt conscience	18.4	20.7	19.0
Cannot forget the mistakes I have made	28.4	36.2	32.4
Having memories of unhappy childhood	12.1	14.0	13.3
Troubled by nightmares	8.6	12.5	10.8
Too many personal problems	15.7	13.8	14.8
Feeling that nobody understands me	18.5	37.3	28.0
No one to whom I can talk about my problems	15.8	30.3	23.3
Having difficulty to discuss my problems	15.7	24.9	20.4
Sometimes, feeling that it is better I have never been born	18.2	25.8	22.0
Thoughts of committing suicide	2.7	2.9	2.8
Sometimes troubled by thoughts of insanity	8.7	8.0	8.3

SOCIAL RELATIONS

Few adolescents felt they were hard to be friendly with or had difficulty in mixing well with others. It appears that having the traits of friendliness does not guarantee that an adolescent can mix well with others as shown by the data in Table 8. Though only 5.6% of the girls declared themselves to be hard to be friendly with, yet 20.4% of them were not mixing well with others.

About a quarter of the boys and girls felt awkward in meeting people, had nothing interesting to say to them and wanted a more pleasing

personality. It appears that these problems cannot be attributed to a lack of opportunities in social activities or having too little time for entertainment and recreation as few of the adolescents encountered these two problems (Table 8).

Table 8
Problems Related to Social Development

Problems	Boys %	Girls %	Total %
Hard to be friendly with	12.9	5.6	15.0
Not mixing well with others	17.4	20.4	18.9
Awkward in meeting people	24.0	29.1	26.0
Having nothing interesting to say to others	24.7	27.1	25.9
Wanting a more pleasing personality	21.3	24.1	22.7
Having no opportunities to participate in social activities	12.7	13.4	13.3
Too little time for entertainment and recreation	17.9	16.9	17.2
Lacking skills in sports and games	26.6	31.6	29.1
Not using my leisure time well	33.8	35.9	34.7
Nothing interesting to do during the holidays	27.1	34.0	30.6
Not allowed to go out with friends	9.4	17.6	13.7
Not allowed to go out at night	19.4	19.0	19.3

Low self-concept may be one of the factors responsible for feelings of awkwardness in the presence of others and of having nothing interesting to say. Such an explanation seems plausible since the girls have lower self-concept than the boys and also more girls than boys checked these two problems. Another explanation is that the close surveillance of girls causes them to be self-conscious in the presence of others who make them feel awkward and tongue-tied. The third explanation is due to the emphasis placed on academic subjects and examinations which tend to confine children's knowledge to school text. They are given little encouragement to read beyond their textbooks as little importance is given to general knowledge and current affairs. As teaching is mainly expository, students are provided with little opportunities to discover the richness in their environment and to develop their interests. Not only is their knowledge restricted by such educational practices but also time will hang heavily on their hands during the holidays because there are no lessons to be learnt and no examinations to be prepared. The problem of having nothing interesting to do during the holidays was expressed by 27.1% of the male adolescents and 34.0% of the female adolescents. About 33.8% of the male and 35.9% of the female adolescents felt that they were not using their

leisure time well. Furthermore, 26.6% of the boys and 31.6% of the girls expressed concern over their lack of ability in sports and games. This shortcoming is probably created by the fact that physical education is of secondary importance, especially for girls in co-educational schools.

Not being allowed to go out with friends and also at night were checked by only a few adolescents, probably for different reasons. Few rural adolescents checked not being allowed to go out with friends because they were permitted to do so while going out at night was never an issue in rural areas since there was nothing to attract adolescents to go out at night. Rural parents restrict their children less in going out with friends because many of them know their children's friends as well. They are probably the children of their own friends and have probably grown up together. On the other hand, not being allowed to go out with their friends were checked by many urban adolescents (Chiam, 1984). Parents in urban areas hardly know each other and they probably have little time or opportunities to get to know their children's friends as well. Consequently, they are inclined to be strict over the issue of their children going out with friends, especially in the night.

RELATIONS WITH THE OPPOSITE SEX

Only a few adolescents were troubled by not being allowed to go out with the opposite sex. The tussle between parents and adolescents over this issue was encountered by a few families only because dating has not yet become a fad among Malaysian adolescents, especially the rural adolescents. In fact, they appeared to fight shy of each other as it was observed that they sat apart in class. There was no mixing during the break and they refused to work with the opposite sex at laboratory work. They tended to express enmity towards the opposite sex. This behaviour was more frequently manifested by the girls. This could be a defensive mechanism against the fear of being attracted to the opposite sex. Only a very small proportion of the adolescents checked 'being in love', 'being disappointed in love' and 'having girl/boyfriend problem'.

Table 9
Problems Related to Relations With the Opposite Sex

Problems	Boys N=521 %	Girls N=550 %	Total N=1075 %
Not allowed to go out with the opposite sex	9.2	17.3	13.4
Disappointed in love	8.1	3.6	5.8
In love	3.8	2.5	3.6
Having boy/girlfriend trouble	13.2	15.4	14.4
Afraid to be friendly with the opposite sex	23.5	20.9	22.1
Embarrassed by talk about sex	22.9	26.9	25.2

About 23.5% of the boys and 20.9% of the girls reported that they were afraid to be friendly with the opposite sex. A total of 22.9% of the boys and 26.9% of the girls admitted to being embarrassed by talk about sex. In view of their weariness of each other, the society's disapproval of an intimacy between them and the taboo placed on discussion of sex, a higher percentage of them were expected to express that they were afraid to be friendly with the opposite sex and embarrased by talk about sex. Inspite of being defensive in their behaviour towards the opposite sex, they may be well-adjusted towards the opposite sex. Co-education may have helped to reduce the mystique of the opposite sex and thus enable them to have a more healthy attitude towards sex. An earlier study revealed that girls and boys in co-educational schools are better adjusted in many aspects of their development than their peers in single-sex schools (Chiam, 1982).

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS

About 2.2% of the sample had parents who were either separated or divorced, 1.1% reported that their mothers were not always at home, 4.0% indicated that their fathers were always not around and 7.8% reported that their families often quarrelled. The data suggest that the adolescents received basic parental care. In fact, the other data not only support this conclusion but indicate further that the parent-adolescent relationship was close for the majority of them (Table 10). Despite being poor, only a handful wanted a different background or were ashamed of their homes. Only 7.8% felt that their parents did not trust them, 6.3% considered their parents to be old-fashioned in their ideas and 3.1% doubted the wisdom of their parents. Generally, the adolescents appeared to respect their parents and trust their judgment. This respect and trust are also reflected in the other findings of this study.

Only 7.8% of the adolescents reported that there was a clash in opinions between them and their parents. This should not be taken to imply that harmony existed between them or that they saw eye-to-eye as 18.2% reported that their parents opposed their plans. 18.4% resented being criticised by their parents and 21.8% claimed that their parents did not understand them. These findings tend to suggest that the lack of conflict between the adolescents and their parents could be due to the fact that the children give in to their parents, probably out of respect for them and their wisdom. This submissive attitude of the adolescents probably explained why only 7.6% were troubled by 'parents making too many decisions for me'.

However, the respect they had for their parents did not deter the young from giving answers which rebuked their parents. About 22.1% of the boys and 23.6% of the girls admitted that they answered their parents in this fashion.

The number of girls who wanted love from their parents was almost twice the number of boys: 23.6% of the girls checked this problem as com-

Table 10
Problems Related to Family Relations

Problems	Boys N=521 %	Girls N=550 %	Total N=1075 %
Parents separated or divorced	2.5	1.8	2.2
Father always not at home	3.8	4.0	4.0
Mother always not at home	1.5	0.7	1.1
Family often quarrel	5.8	9.5	7.8
Family relationships not close	4.6	8.4	6.5
Wanting a different family background	3.5	4.3	4.0
Ashamed of my home	8.5	8.4	8.3
Parents not trusting me	7.6	7.9	7.8
Parents are old-fashioned in their ideas	4.6	8.0	6.3
Doubting the wisdom of my parents	2.5	3.7	3.1
Clash of opinions between me and my parents	6.4	9.1	7.8
Parents opposing some of my plans	18.4	18.0	18.2
Often being criticised by parents	16.5	20.4	18.4
Parents making too many decisions for me	7.4	7.9	7.6
Talking back to my parents	22.1	23.6	22.8
Parents do not understand me	17.5	26.2	21.8
Wanting love from parents	14.6	23.6	18.2
Parents expecting too much of me	38.2	35.4	36.8
Parents sacrificing too much for me	29.4	26.5	28.0
Parents working too hard	21.5	18.4	19.9
Sometimes, I feel like running away from home	13.5	14.9	14.2

pared to 14.6% of the boys. This difference is not unexpected in view of the preference of parents for boys. Furthermore, this difference is more marked in the rural than in the urban sample (Chiam, 1984) showing that the preference for boys is stronger in the rural than urban areas.

The cry that 'parents are expecting too much of me' was echoed by 38.2% of the boys and 35.4% of the girls. High parental expectations can exert great pressure on the child, especially if he is made to feel that his parents are working very hard and are making many sacrifices for him. Although this pressure can act as a great motivating force, it can also create mental agony, especially if the expectations are unrealistic and the child is incapable of attaining them. Not only is he imbued with guilt feelings of having failed his parents but he will also suffer from feelings of inadequacy. High parental expectations could be one of the reasons why 14.2% of th adolescents felt like running away from home, even though there appeared to be no problems in the home.

It is highly desirable that parents feel responsible for their offsprings and are prepared to work hard and make sacrifices to enable them to have a good education which is perceived as the vehicle for social mobility. No matter how noble this gesture may be, parents must be careful not to sacrifice the mental health of the child for materialistic gains. Many parents may, consciously or unconsciously, use their children's feelings to achieve their own ambitions or goals. Our data show that 28.0% of the adolescents felt their parents were making too many sacrifices for them and 19.9% had parents who were working too hard.

SCHOOL AND STUDIES

The adolescents seemed to have a number of problems related to their studies. They were worried about their marks, and fearful of failing their examinations. Getting low marks, having trouble with mathematics, and inability to express themselves well were some of the problems experienced by the adolescents. Out of a list of six problems, four of them were related to examinations. Although 62.2% of the adolescents were afraid of failing in their school work, only 28.4% felt they were not smart enough. Can this fear be attributed to the emphasis placed on academic excellence? Does the transfer of students who are good in their work to residential schools leave the remaining ones with little confidence in their abilities to pass examinations? Further research is necessary to answer these questions.

Most of these adolescents realised that they possessed inefficient and ineffective study habits as 60.9% of them checked this problem. With poor study habits, students need to spend a great deal of time at their studies and yet may not do well in the examinations. Research findings showed that urban adolescents felt that they were not spending enough time at their studies when, in fact, they spent most of their after-school hours in activities related to schoolwork such as tuition, completing homework and preparing their lessons (Chiam, 1983a). It is likely that many of the rural adolescents are doing likewise, except that a number of them may not have the benefit of tuition.

Some may argue that rural children have to help their parents after school, leaving them with little time for their studies. However, our data show that only 20.7% of the boys and 16.6% of the girls checked having to help their parents after school. This indicates that the majority of the students had time for their studies. This is further reinforced by the finding that 20.9% of the boys and 24.7% of the girls were unable to complete their work on time. Although only 16.6% of the girls had to help their parents after school, yet 35.2% felt they were not spending enough time at their studies. Only 23% of the boys checked this problem. It has been observed that girls generally tend to be more conscientious in their studies

than boys. Their industrious nature and poor study habits could have generated this feeling that they were not putting in sufficient efforts in their studies.

Unlike their urban peers who complained that teachers were lacking in personality, disinterested in their students and inconsiderate of their feelings (Chiam, 1982), only a small number of rural adolescents shared a similar opinion of their teachers. On the whole, a large number of them felt that teachers were considerate of their feelings. Although most Malaysian teachers dislike being posted to the rural areas, yet the data show that they are performing their tasks well in rural schools. They receive less complaints from their students as compared to their counterpart in the urban areas. Perhaps, rural teachers put in more effort in their work since there is not much to distract them in the rural areas. Also, rural students are less critical of their teachers than their urban counterparts. Whatever the reason may be, teachers are receiving more respect in the rural areas.

Table 11
Problems Related to School and Studies

Problems	Boys %	Girls %	Total %
Worried about examinations	60.0	73.3	67.0
Worried about marks	40.0	47.5	43.7
Afraid of failing in schoolwork	57.6	66.7	62.2
Getting low marks	46.1	49.7	47.9
Trouble with mathematics	66.4	71.8	69.1
Cannot express myself well	32.8	36.8	34.8
Not smart enough	26.5	30.2	28.4
Do not know how to study effectively	60.1	62.0	60.9
Not spending enough time in studies	23.2	35.2	33.9
Not completing school work on time	20.9	24.7	26.7
Have to help parents after school	20.7	16.6	18.6
Teachers lacking in personality	9.3	7.4	8.4
Teachers not interested in students	6.1	4.2	5.1
Teachers inconsiderate of students' feelings	14.0	17.1	15.6
Not getting along with teachers	13.6	8.2	10.8

SUMMARY

In an attempt to know more about rural adolescents, a checklist of 195 problems was administered to 550 girls and 521 boys in three rural areas. The ages of these adolescents ranged from 13 to 17 years. A majority of them are of a low socioeconomic status. Inspite of their poverty, very few

of them were ashamed of their homes and hoped for a different kind of family background. Family relationships were close and there was little conflict between them and their parents. However, this lack of conflict was probably due to the fact that they tend to give in to their parents, out of respect for them. Rural children enjoyed better family relationships than their urban peers.

Though they were troubled by poor complexion, they were satisfied with their physique. Like their urban peers, they tended to be timid, shy, sensitive, nervous, easily embarrassed, lacking in self-confidence and possessing an inferiority complex. They were also afraid to make mistakes and had difficulties in forgetting them.

Many of the adolescents admitted that they felt uncomfortable in the presence of others and they had nothing interesting to talk about. During the holidays, they neither had interesting pursuits nor did they utilise their leisure time well. The emphasis on academic subjects and academic excellence could have contributed to these problems of the adolescents.

The adolescents appeared to be very concerned about examinations and marks. They expressed their fear of failing examinations and other matters that they had been involved in. High parental expectations could function as a strong motivating force but at the same time, they could also create tension, mental agony, feelings of guilt and inadequacy, especially for those who are incapable of fulfilling their parents' expectations.

Boys tend to be better adjusted emotionally than girls who generally felt less loved, insecure and less worthy of themselves. These negative self-feelings could be brought about by parental preference for boys. Rural adolescents appeared to have less problems and are emotionally more secure than their urban adolescents. This could be due to the closer family relationship and the greater respect adolescents accord to their parents in rural communities.

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Psychology and Life of Korean Children and Adolescents

Joon Hee Park

INTRODUCTION

The researcher has carried out a nation-wide survey on the psychology and life of Korean children and adolescents in 1979. A questionnaire was used. The subjects, consisting of about 6,000 male and female students from the elementary school (4–6 grades), junior high (7–9 grades) and senior high school (10–12 grades), were randomly selected on a stratified basis. They were asked to respond to questions relating to their psychological make-up, national ethics, philosophy of life, and practical behaviour at home and in the school.

Generally, the resuits were favourable. It is suggested that the psychology and life of Korean children and adolescents had been influenced by traditional Confucian philosophy.

Five years following the completion of this study, the researcher recognised the need to carry out another survey to obtain comparative data and to make recommendations in connection with the guidance programme. The researcher hypothesised that there would be changes in the psychology and life of these students as compared to those surveyed in 1979. Firstly, the former group of students was born about five years later. Secondly, their way of thinking and life patterns would be different from the situation of 1979, having been influenced by political, economic, social and technological changes over the last five years. The second study was initiated in March 1983.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Elementary School Pupils

Life Patterns

In terms of hours of sleep on a week day, 39.0% of 1,265 pupils slept a maximum of nine hours. By sex, the percentage for male and female students was 39.1% and 38.9% respectively. In comparing with the 1979 data, 48.1% of 651 pupils slept for a maximum of nine hours on a week day and the percentage of male and female students was 48.9 and 47.2 respectively. Here, it is suggest that the sleeping time of elementary school pupils a day has been reduced as compared to the data of five years ago. However, there is very little difference between male and female students in terms of hours of sleep a day.

A total of 31.7% of 1,265 pupils watched a maximum of three hours of television on a week day and the percentage of male and female students is 32.6 and 30.8 respectively. In contrast, 42.4% of 651 pupils viewed television for an hour during the week. There were 46.2% of male and 38.1% of female students. On the whole, the number of hours of television viewing has increased from one hour to three hours between 1979 and 1984. This may be due to the fact that television programmes have become much more attractive over the last five years with the development of educational shows.

About a third of the students spent from one to two hours in completing their homework. While about 34.0% of the male students spent this amount of time, the corresponding percentage for female students was 33.0. In the case of the 1979 data, about 37.0% of the subjects spent a similar period of time on their homework. There is therefore a slight decrease in the number of students devoting an hour or two on their homework.

In terms of leisure hours, 27.5% of the 1,265 students spent two hours of their time leisurely during the weekday. The equivalent in percentage for the subjects in 1979 was 32.6 but leisure time was only an hour instead of two. It is thus very interesting and a phenomenon worthy of serious consideration that the hours for homework had decreased and those for leisure time had increased. This perhaps would be due to psychological changes arising from changes in social mobility and structure, and the way of life in adulthood at home and in society. Students could have been influenced by the thoughts and life patterns of their parents and social leaders. Many of the parents and social leaders had developed greater interest in outside activities and accustomed to enjoy their own leisure time.

Lastly, in relation to reading time, 44.3% of the subjects spent an hour a day on reading. The male students constituted 44.9% and female

students 43.7%. In comparing with the results of the 1979 survey, the overall percentage was 49.2 who read an hour a day. This suggests the decreasing tendency in students to read more than an hour a day.

Psychological Experiences

When asked "What kind of activity do you want to do?", 49.3% indicated that they would devote their services to the poor. The percentage involved is higher than that of 1979 when 41.9% indicated their desire to service the poor. Generally, a higher proportion of female than male students volunteered for such services.

With regard to ethics and respect for the national flag, more than 85.0% of the students were positive in their attitudes toward a code of ethics and national loyalty. However, the percentages involved had decreased between 1979 and 1984 and this might be of concern to expertise involved in the structure of moral and civic education programmes.

Junior and Senior High School Students

View of the State

When the respondents were asked "What do you want to do for the state?', 91.8% of 3,116 students wished to assist in the social development of the state. A majority of them are very patriotic. In 1979, the equivalent percentage was 90.9 of 3,878 students.

Typical responses to the question of 'What are the most prideful things in the state?' were 'the remarkable achievement in economic development' and 'the single ethnological nation that has overcome the national crisis'. The first response was given by 29.4% of 3,116 students and in this connection, the conviction of senior high school students was stronger than that of the junior high school students. With regard to the first response, the percentage of 1984 respondents was higher than those of 1979, and vice-versa in respect of the second answer.

More than half of the subjects expected Korea to develop into an advanced country. However, the expectation in terms of realisation was higher among students in junior high school than senior high school. In the 1979 survey, 68.9% of the respondents expected Korea to be an advanced country and once again, the junior high school students were stronger in their conviction than senior high school students.

View of Ethics

One of the ethical experiences is filial piety to parents which has been emphasised in societies steeped in Confucianism. In this respect, 54.9% believed and showed obedience to their parents. Data also indicated that senior high school students are much more obedient than junior high school students. In the survey of 1979, junior high school students were more obedient than those in the senior high schools.

It is shown that many of the high school students – 43.8% – valued the importance of lineage when they chose to marry. In the 1979 survey, the equivalent percentage was 53.3.

Finally, 59.7% of the 1,418 senior high school students rejected the idea of having intercourse before marriage. In 1979, 49.9% of them also rejected it. In this connection, the senior high school students are traditional about sex and morals.

View of the Home

On family life, most of the junior and senior high school students recognised the importance and the significance of home being a place where there is mutual sharing of love between family members. The percentage who believed in it was 90.2. The percentage difference between 1979 and 1984 data is negligible. Nowadays, most of them have come to realise the value of family relationship and this can be a very desirable development for human relationship within and outside the home.

To a majority of them, a good father is one that creates a warm home environment and permits children to behave freely. In this connection, the same definition was provided in the 1979 survey. Where mother's rates is concerned, as high as 93.5% of Korean wished mothers to be better housekeepers.

Schooling

On the real meaning of schooling, above 40% of them recognised school as a place where academic achievement and exploration of truth could be carried out. In the 1979 survey, however, more than half the respondents considered schools to be places where personality could be developed. Here, personality development was given higher priorities than academic achievement. Nevertheless, both parents and students realise that academic attainment would enhance their socio-economic status.

Many of the students recognised highly the value of a disciplined personality in their teachers. In fact, they would want these teachers to guide them in the development of personality.

CONCLUSION

The observation indicated above suggests that the psychology and life of children and adolescent in Korea have undergone some changes between 1979 and 1984. In some respects, they are desirable and in others less desirable. Without question, changes in political, economic and social situations had stimulated changes in patterns of family relationship, living standards and social structure. Improved educational programmes, facilities and environment need to be looked into to enhance better personal development and socio-national welfare.